Lightweight 155mm Howitzer

Description

The Lightweight 155mm Howitzer (LW155) is the world's first 155mm towed howitzer with a flyweight of less than 9,800 pounds (with digital fire control). It offers greater ground mobility and improved reaction times compared to the M198 howitzer, which weighs nearly 16, 000-lb. M198, that it is designed to replace.

Operational Impact

The LW155 towed howitzer system—defined as the howitzer, its prime mover, and associated equipmentwill meet the increased operational demands in the areas of lethality, survivability, mobility, deployability, and sustainability required to support maneuver warfare. The system's operational tempo will increase over that of previous systems, ensuring that greater firepower is available while vulnerability is reduced.

Program Status

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition approved the program for low-rate initial production in November 2002. The program is currently producing a total of 94 systems, with initial deliveries supporting production qualification and first-article testing, both of which are currently underway. Successful completion of these tests, along with the joint operational testing with the Army in late 2004, will support a full-rate production decision in early 2005 for a total of 356 Marine Corps systems and 233 Army systems. In parallel, the detailed design of the Army-funded digital fire control system (DFCS) has been successfully completed, and that program has been merged with the M777 to support a combined operational test and a combined full-rate production decision. The DFCS will be retrofitted to all Marine Corps howitzers initially fielded with glass and iron sights, and it will support joint/Army multi-year procurement of the DFCS-equipped weapon (M777A1) for the balance of production in FY 2005-2007.

Procurement Profile:	FY 05	FY 06
Quantity:	107	78

Developer/Manufacturer:

Prime Contractor:

BAE Systems, Barrow in Furness, UK

Sub-Contractors:

General Dynamics, ATP, Burlington, VT

Wegmann, USA, Lynchburg, VA

Hydro-Mill, Chatsworth, CA